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Aspirations and expectations held toward marriage by a sample of Negro and white adolescent girls from 3 all-rural East Texas counties were compared. The primary objective of the study was to determine (using Chi-Square analysis techniques) the extent to which racial differences existed in desired age of marriage, desired and expected number of children, and aspirations and expectations for employment after marriage, while controlling for socioeconomic status. Results of the study indicated that except for number of children desired and expected, statistically significant racial differences did exist. Negro girls desired marriage significantly later than white girls, and well over one-half of the Negro girls desired and expected to work outside the home even after the arrival of children while a majority of whites wanted and expected to work only until they had children. (EV)

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RACIAL DIFFERENCES IN TEEN-AGE GIRLS' ORIENTATIONS TOWARD MARRIAGE: A STUDY OF YOUTH LIVING IN AN ECONOMICALLY DEPRESSED AREA OF THE SOUTH*

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Abstract

Little empirical evidence exists on the aspirations and expectations held by adolescent girls toward marital status and procreation. This paper reports on a racial comparison of a set of aspirations and expectations held toward marriage by a sample of adolescent girls from three East Texas counties. The specific research objectives were to determine to what extent racial differences existed, while controlling on SES, for the following projections: desired age of marriage; desired and expected number of children; and aspirations and expectations for employment after marriage. The findings indicated, that except for number of children desired and expected, statistically significant racial differences existed. Both Negro and white girls desired and expected small families--a mean of 3 children. On the other hand, it was found that Negro girls desired marriage significantly later than white girls. Findings on orientations toward work after marriage indicated that a large majority of both racial groupings both desired and expected to work after marriage. However, significant racial differences were observed in reference to work before and after the arrival of children. An aspiration to expectation drift toward less full-time employment was noted for both groups. A finding of major significance was that the racial differences persisted even when SES was controlled.

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Introduction

Societal expectations regarding marriage and procreation are so strongly inculcated within the individual that few people consciously consider whether or not they want to get married.[1] This observation is reflected in the emphases apparent in research on adolescents' aspirations and expectations. The vast bulk of this research has focused on projections of occupational and educational attainment; very few studies have explored youths' orientations toward marriage and family development.[2] Nevertheless, few would argue that decisions to enter marriage and to begin a family constitute one of the most important problem areas that an adolescent has to cope with in planning for the future. It is our contention that youth's orientations toward entering the statuses of marital partner and parent constitute an important element of their "frame of aspirational reference," a more less integrated set of goals that specifies an adult status-set they hold as a guide into the future.[3]

Decisions regarding marriage and family formation have particular significance for the adolescent girl. While it is true that our urbanized society tends to offer increasing opportunities for employment of women and that girls are encouraged to think of high educational goals and even occupational careers, most people in the society still believe that women should place a high priority on marriage and child-rearing regardless of their abilities or preferences.[4] An adolescent girl undergoing normal anticipatory socialization undoubtedly formulates some relatively specific preferences and expectations about her projected marital and parental roles. There is a need for sound empirical information on this subject to broaden our presently restricted understanding of the frames of aspirational

references. In addition, particularly in reference to youth living in impoverished circumstances, sound information on orientations toward such critical decisions as age of marriage and size of family could prove useful for the development of effective ameliorative programs.

We shall attempt in this paper to begin to fill this empirical void. Our purpose is to examine to what extent racial differences exist in orientations held toward age of marriage, size of family, and work after marriage through data obtained from a recent Texas study of teen-age girls living in economically depressed rural areas.

Theory and Review of Relevant Literature

A number of sociologists contend that considerable differences exist in marriage and family structures of Negroes and whites in our society. As compared with white families, it has been observed that Negro families are more often disorganized and easily broken,[5] are larger,[6] and that Negroes marry at younger ages.[7] In addition, it is known that Negro families tend to be more often female-centered and often dependent on the mother for the only stable economic provider.[8] These differences in family structure are thought to influence the nature of anticipatory socialization that youth undergo. According to Bell, "children's experiences in learning from their parents the roles of husband and wife have long-run implications for their own future marriage."[9] If this proposition is valid, we can expect that racial differences will be reflected in the aspirations and expectations girls have for marriage and family.

Also of relevance is Robert Merton's proposition that the inculcation of similar goals is a dominant characteristic of our society which cuts across all

population segments.[10] Other writers have supported Merton's general proposition as it applies to Negroes in our society. For example, Broom and Glenn have indicated that Negroes have acquired nearly the same aspirations, goals, tastes, and standards of other Americans,[11] and Gordon has commented upon the rapid "behavioral assimilation" of Negroes in the United States.[12]

While it is true that most past studies involving racial comparisons of aspirations and expectations have produced findings indicating that racial differences exist--mostly in reference to job and educational projections, the same body of evidence generally supports Merton's contention in that most youth of both races were found to maintain high-level status projections.[13] Only one past study was located that provided a racial comparison on some aspects of youth's orientations toward marriage: in a North Carolina study of high school seniors Drabick found that white youth generally planned (expectation) to marry earlier than Negroes.[14] Few other relevant studies exist, and those that do often provide fragmental or vague results about aspirational phenomena. For instance, several researchers have reported that almost all girls desire marriage,[15] and several additional studies indicate that relatively large proportions of girls desire to work after marriage.[16] Another study of some relevance found that almost all ninth grade students desire more than one child.[17] Perhaps of more use is a finding from a Texas study by Moore and Holtzman--youth from working classes expected marriage soon after they quit or finished school.[18]

Supporting the need to distinguish between the phenomena of aspirations and expectations in research, Stephenson elaborated on Merton's general proposition by demonstrating--through a study including racial comparisons--that, while

occupational aspirations tend to vary little by class, expectations vary considerably.[19] No evidence indicating whether or not this condition exists for family projections could be found.

In summary, existing theory leads us to infer contradictory hypotheses in regard to whether or not racial differences should exist in girls' status orientations toward family development. Merton's proposition that similar goals prevail throughout the various segments of the society is supported at a general level of comparison by evidence pertaining to job and educational orientations. At the same time, the same body of evidence indicates that racial differences are observed at more specific levels of comparison. Some evidence also exists to indicate that expectations are more variable than aspirations. However, the little past research directly relevant to youth's aspirations and expectations toward family and marriage provides almost no useful evidence about racial differences. As far as we can tell, our investigation will be the first to provide a relatively systematic attempt to determine if racial differences exist over an array of girls' aspirations and expectations toward marriage and family formation.

Research Objectives

Our analysis was structured to determine whether or not racial differences existed among our respondents in reference to the following aspirations and expectations for which we had indicators available:

Aspirations	Expectations
Age of marriage	----------
Size of family	Size of family
Work after marriage	Work after marriage

In addition, we attempted to determine whether or not racial differences observed existed independent of SES by extending our analysis to incorporate a control for SES.

Respondents

Data for this study were obtained during the Spring of 1966 from high school sophomores attending school in three all-rural East Central Texas counties. These counties were purposively selected to be homogeneous in reference to two additional criteria--a high proportion of Negro residents and a high proportion of low-income families. We interviewed all sophomores attending school the day of our visit and made no attempt to interview those who were enrolled but absent or those of a similar age who had dropped out of school. Twenty-three high schools existed in these three counties and the enrollment of the sophomore classes ranged from five to eighty.

In each school the subjects were group interviewed. After the questionnaires were distributed, a trained interviewer read each question aloud while other interviewers supervised and aided the respondents as they responded to the questionnaire. Complete data was available for 99 Negro and 134 white girls.

Even though the Negro and white girls lived in the same geographic areas, they came from rather different social backgrounds--including, for the most part, separate schools. Compared to their Negro counterparts, the white girls came from more economically advantaged families, had better educated parents, fewer brothers and sisters, and more often both parents present. Detailed tabular presentations of these comparisons are provided in Appendix A.

Indicators and Measurements

Questions eliciting responses indicating the respondents' aspirations and expectations were scattered throughout the questionnaire. Brief discussions of the indicators and modes of measurement utilized are presented below. The original response categories utilized for each variable and frequency distributions of responses over these categories are provided in Appendix B.

Age at Marriage. Only an indicator of aspiration was available. The respondent was asked to indicate through a free response the age she would like to get married. The responses to the question were grouped into three categories: (a) the 19 and below age group representing those who plan to marry while still in their teens; (b) the 20-22 age group representing those who plan to wait a few years after high school; and (c) the 23 and above age group representing those who plan to finish college or become established in a job before marrying.

Family size. Aspiration concerning family size was obtained by asking--"How many children do you want?" The subject was to indicate her answer by circling one of the eight responses provided ranging from "1" to "8 or more." The question used to obtain the subject's expectation was worded in a similar manner except that the words "expect to have" were substituted for "want." The responses to both of these questions were collapsed into three categories for analysis: (a) small (1 to 2 children); (b) average (3 to 4 children); and (c) large (5 or more children).

Work After Marriage. Responses resulting from this question were used to indicate aspirations regarding work after marriage:

> "What do you want to do about work outside the home after you are married?"

Five alternative choices were provided for the respondents to select from:

a. Not work outside the home at all
b. Work part-time until I have a child
c. Work full-time until I have a child
d. Work part-time even after I have children
e. Work full-time even after I have children

Basically the same question was used to secure information regarding the subject's expectation of work after marriage. However, instead of the word "want", the words "actually expect" were substituted.

Social Class Measure. An attempt was made to classify the two groups of respondents separately into three social classes on the basis of the occupational level of the main breadwinners in their families, Table 1. These three categories were: (a) white collar workers; (b) skilled workers; and (c) operatives and unskilled workers.[20] The plan to stratify the respondents into these three social class groups had to be abandoned because there were very few Negro respondents in the white collar and skilled workers' category. Even when these two groups were combined, the number of Negro subjects was still to small to make any kind of comparisons with the corresponding white grouping, Table 1. Also many of the respondents did not give enough information about the size of the farms or ranches the main breadwinner in their families either owned or managed. It was difficult to group them within any of the three social class categories. Keeping this group as a separate category, however, did not seem wise for the reason that in each racial group less than 20 respondents listed their breadwinner in this occupational category.

In view of these problems, a decision was made to simply do a comparative analysis of lower class Negro and white groups. Although this procedure does not represent an ideal control for the influence of social class, it was judged to be the only realistically possible method. Among the respondents included in this study, sixty-eight Negroes and thirty-five whites were classed as lower class.

Table 1. Distribution of the Respondents According to the Occupations of the Main Breadwinner in Their Families*

Occupation of the Main Breadwinner	Negro Number	Negro Percent	White Number	White Percent
White Collar Workers				
Professional or technical	3	3.2	12	9.0
Managerial**	1	1.0	19	14.5
Sales	1	1.0	3	2.3
Clerical	-	-	5	3.8
Sub-total	5	5.2	39	29.6
Skilled Workers				
Skilled trade	6	6.2	40	30.3
Enlisted man	1	1.0	-	-
Sub-total	7	7.2	40	30.3
Operatives and Unskilled Workers				
Machine operators	15	15.5	12	9.0
Farm laborers	12	12.4	3	2.3
Laborers	30	30.8	17	12.9
Unemployed	11	11.3	3	2.3
Sub-total	68	70.3	35	26.5
Farmers and Ranchers				
Farm or ranch owner or manager	17	17.6	18	13.6
Sub-total	17	17.6	18	13.6
TOTAL	97	100.0	132	100.0

*The total sample drawn was 99 Negroes and 134 whites. Of these, 2 Negro and 2 white girls gave no information regarding the occupation of the main breadwinner in their families. Those who indicated that the main breadwinner in their family was unemployed were included in the third category.

**Included owners and managers of a company, business or government office but not farmers.

Findings

The findings are presented in two parts. The first part consists of results obtained from analysis involving comparisons of the entire Negro and white groupings involved in the study. The second section contains the results of our attempt to ascertain whether any racial differences observed exist independently of SES.

Race and Orientations Toward Family Development

Age at Marriage. Negro and white girls differed significantly in their preferences regarding the age at which they would like to be married, Table 2. Almost one-half of the Negroes expressed a desire to marry at 23 years or older while a larger majority, four-fifths, of the whites desired to marry before the age of 23. Although a wider range of choices was noted for the white sample, closer inspection of the data revealed that the Negro respondents were distributed almost continuously over a larger number of age categories ranging from 17 to 30 years of age, Table 3. Racial comparisons on several measures of central tendency of desired age at marriage consistently show that Negroes preferred to marry at a later age than their white counterparts, Table 4. The mean desired age of marriage indicates clearly that respondents of both races desire generally to marry at least several years after leaving high school and that Negro girls desire marriage on the average 1.5 years later than the white girls.

Family Size. Negro and white girls were similar in their aspirations concerning family size in that a large majority of both desired to have a family of 4 children or less, Table 5. Not one in either racial grouping expressed a

Table 2. Desired Age at Marriage of Negro and White Girls

Age Level	Negro N=98	White N=133
	- - - - - - - - PERCENT - - - - - - - -	
19 years and below	17	29
20-22 years	35	51
23 years and above	48	20
TOTAL	100	100
No Information	1	1
$X^2 = 21.21$	D.F. = 2	$P < .001$

Table 3. Desired Age at Marriage of Negro and White Girls (Original Distribution)

Age	Negro Number	Negro Percent	White Number	White Percent
16	-	-	1	0.8
17	2	2.1	3	2.3
18	9	9.2	16	12.0
19	6	6.1	19	14.3
20	11	11.2	25	18.7
21	12	12.2	25	18.7
22	11	11.2	18	13.5
23	8	8.2	8	6.0
24	16	16.3	5	3.8
25	10	10.2	11	8.3
26	4	4.1	-	-
27	4	4.1	-	-
28	1	1.0	-	-
29	-	-	-	-
30	2	2.1	1	0.8
31	1	1.0	-	-
39	1	1.0	-	-
65	-	-	1	0.8
TOTAL	98	100.0	133	100.0
No Information	1		1	

Table 4. A Negro-White Comparison of Measures of Central Tendency in Reference to Desired Age at Marriage

Measures	Negro N=98	White N=133
Mean	22.6 years	21.1 years
Median	22.0 years	21.0 years
Mode	24.0 years	20.0 and 21.0 years
No Information	1	1

desire to have no children and very few wanted to have only one child.* Moreover, only a small proportion in each group desired to have four children. Negro and white distributions had very similar measures of central tendency: the average "ideal" size for both groups was 3 children, Table 6.

Although no statistically significant differences were found between the two racial groups, it is interesting to note that more Negro girls desired a family of only one or two children while more white girls preferred a family of from three to four children, Table 5. In addition, it was observed that the number of children desired by the Negroes ranged only from 1 to 6 while the choices of the white girls ranged from 1 to 8 or more children. This is surprising when it is considered that the Negro girls came from much larger families than the white girls.

The expectations of Negro and white girls regarding family size were very similar to their aspirations, Tables 5 and 6. Still, it can be noted that the proportions in both groups that desired small families decreased slightly when expectations were considered. At the same time, the proportions of those that expected average and large families increased slightly. This finding indicates that there is a slight aspiration to expectation drift toward a larger family size.

Of special significance is the observation that only a small portion of both racial groups wanted or expected a large family,in spite of the fact that these girls came from a rural background where large families are supposedly valued. What is more, the lack of clear racial differences is surprising when it is considered that the average Negro respondent in this study had about 6 brothers and sisters as compared with only 3 for the white respondents.

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*Only 5 percent of the Negro girls and less than 4 percent of the whites expressed a desire to have just one child.

Table 5. Size of Family Orientations as Indicated by Number of Children Desired and Expected by Negro and White Girls

Size of Family	Aspiration 1/		Expectation 2/	
	Negro N=99	White N=132	Negro N=99	White N=130
	PERCENT			
Small (1-2)	49	39	40	36
Average (3-4)	44	57	49	56
Large (5 or more)	7	4	11	8
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
No Information		2		4

1/ $X^2 = 3.60$ D. F. = 2 $P > .10 < .20$

2/ $X^2 = 1.62$ D. F. = 2 $P > .30 < .50$

Table 6. A Negro-White Comparison of the Measures of Central Tendency in Reference to Number of Children Desired and Expected

Measures	Aspiration		Expectation	
	Negro N=99	White N=132	Negro N=99	White N=130
Mean	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.2
Median	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Mode	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
No Information		2		4

Work After Marriage. Vast majorities of both Negro and white girls expressed a desire to work for some period of time after marriage, Table 7. Given this important similarity, several significant differences between the racial groups were noted. The bulk of the white respondents made the qualified choice of working outside the home only until they have children. In contrast, well over one-half of the Negro girls desired to work outside the home even after the arrival of children as compared to less than one-fifth of the whites.

The differences observed for work goals between the two racial groupings held true for expectations as well, Table 7. For both groups differences between aspirations and expectations were small and insignificant.

Negro and white girls had clearly different orientations toward part-time work after marriage, Table 8. More whites desired and expected part-time employment before the arrival of children while on the other hand, more Negroes preferred and anticipated part-time jobs after they have children. Overall, roughly one-half of both groups desired and anticipated part-time work at some period after marriage. An aspiration to expectation drift towards more part-time employment was noted for both racial groupings.

While about half of both groups desired full-time work at some period after marriage, more whites desired full-time employment before they have children, and, conversely, more Negroes desired full-time work after the arrival of children, Table 8. A drift towards less full-time employment was observed when the aspirations and expectations of each racial group were compared; whereas about a half of both groups aspired to work full-time, only about one-third of each expected to.

Table 7. Desire and Expectation of Work After Marriage of Negro and White Girls

Alternatives	Aspiration 1/		Expectation 2/	
	Negro N=92	White N=126	Negro N=94	White N=123
	- - - - - - - - - Percent - - - - - - - - - -			
Not work at all	9	19	13	19
Work until children	36	62	33	54
Work after children	55	19	54	27
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
No Information	7	8	5	11

1/ $X^2 = 31.43$ D. F. = 2 $P < .001$

2/ $X^2 = 16.91$ D. F. = 2 $P < .001$

Table 8. Negro and White Girls' Aspirations and Expectations for Work After Marriage

Alternatives	Aspiration 1/		Expectation 2/	
	Negro N=92	White N=126	Negro N=94	White N=123
	Percent			
Not work outside the home at all	9	19	13	19
Work part-time until I have a child	13	19	17	26
Work full-time until I have a child	23	42	16	28
Work part-time even after I have children	28	10	36	21
Work full-time even after I have children	27	10	18	6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
No Information	7	8	4	11

1/ $X^2 = 31.59$ D.F. = 4 $P < .001$

2/ $X^2 = 18.38$ D.F. = 4 $P > .001 < .01$

Summary. Similarities as well as differences were observed in the orientations toward marriage and family development of Negro and white adolescent girls, Table 9. Negro and white girls were found to have similar orientations toward family size in that a majority of both desired and expected an average of three children. For both groups, a drift towards a slightly larger family size was noted when their aspirations and expectations were compared.

Significant differences between the two racial groups were found in reference to their orientations toward age at marriage. On the whole, Negro girls desired to marry one and a half years later than their white counterparts.

Important differences were found in the orientations of the two groups toward work after marriage. Orientations of both races toward work in general after marriage revealed that a majority of the whites wanted and expected to work only until they have children, while a majority of the Negroes desired and anticipated employment even after they have children. An analysis of more specific preferences and expectations of the two races in reference to part-time and full-time employment showed that more white girls desired and expected employment either on a full-time or part-time basis before they have children, while more Negroes wanted and anticipated part-time or full-time work after they have children. A comparison of the aspirations and expectations of each group revealed a drift toward more part-time employment and, conversely, less full-time employment.

Social Class and Racial Differences

As was noted previously, we attempted to control on SES for those orientation variables demonstrating racial differences among the entire study populations by comparing only the lower class segments of both racial groupings. It should be

Table 9. Summary of Chi-Square Analyses on Racial Difference

Variable	P at .05	Description of Difference
Desired age at marriage	S	N > W
Number of children desired	NS	--
Number of children expected	NS	--
Desire for work after marriage	S	N > W
Part-time work before children	S	N < W
Part-time work after children	S	N > W
Full-time work before children	S	N < W
Full-time work after children	S	N > W
Expectation of work after marriage	S	N > W
Part-time work before children	S	N < W
Part-time work after children	S	N > W
Full-time work before children	S	N < W
Full-time work after children	S	N > W

noted that aspirations and expectations for size of family were not included in this analysis because no significant racial differences were observed in the earlier comparisons. The results of this analysis are summarized in Table 10. The detailed tabular data from which these results were obtained are provided in Appendix C.

As was the case in the previous analysis, significant differences were found in the aspirations and expectations of lower class Negro and white girls toward work after marriage. In general, more whites preferred and expected to work part-time or full-time before they have children, while more Negroes desired and anticipated part-time or full-time employment after the arrival of children. On the other hand, the consistent aspiration to expectation drift toward part-time employment observed for the entire racial groupings was not observed for the lower class segments. In reference to desired age of marriage, the lower class segments differed slightly more than the entire racial groupings--lower class Negro girls desired marriage on the average 1.8 years later than their white counterparts.

In summary, the evidence consistently supports the conclusion that racial differences in aspirations for age of marriage and for orientations toward work after marriage maintain when social class is held constant. It can be inferred from this that race does influence, independently of class, a number of status orientations that adolescent girls hold toward family development.

Table 10. Comparison of Racial Differences Observed for Total Study Populations and Lower Class Segments.*

Variable	Differences the Same	Lower Class Differences Less	Lower Class Differences Greater
Desired age at marriage			X
Number of children desired	X		
Number of children expected	X		
Desire for work after marriage	X		
Part-time work before children	X		
Part-time work after children	X		
Full-time work before children	X		
Full-time work after children	X		
Expectation of work after marriage	X		
Part-time work before children	X		
Part-time work after children	X		
Full-time work before children		X	
Full-time work after children	X		

*The results of the chi-square tests for part-time and full-time work are given in Appendix C. Although the chi-square test that included expectations of part-time and full-time work after marriage was not significant at the .05 level, racial differences worthy of note were nevertheless observed.

Summary and Conclusions

The particular nature of the population studied limits the conclusions that can be drawn regarding racial differences in orientations toward family development of adolescent girls. As was noted earlier, the respondents of this study resided in economically deprived and extremely rural counties located in East Texas. Also, the study area was located within a cultural area characteristic of the traditional South with regard to race relations.[21] It is reasonable to assume that the conclusions derived from this study will generally apply to other adolescent girls residing in similar areas of Texas and the South.

Racial Similarities. On the basis of the data obtained, it can be concluded that even when social class was controlled Negro and white girls had similar orientations towards family size in that both groupings wanted and expected an average of three children. Results of previous studies with adult samples have found similar family size aspirations as those expressed by the respondents of this study.[22]

Racial Differences. On the other hand, from the findings presented, it can be concluded that Negro and white girls held different orientations toward age at marriage and work after marriage. More precisely it can be concluded that white girls preferred to marry earlier than their Negro counterparts. A study of the age at marriage preferences of senior girls in North Carolina indicated racial differences similar to those here.[23]

Our results support conclusions from several previous studies that Negro and white girls wanted and expected to work for some period of time after they marry.[24] However, our conclusions that the two racial groupings differed significantly in reference to the stage of family development when they wanted and expected to work has no collaborating evidence.

Perhaps the most significant conclusion evolving from our results is that race appears to exert an influence independent of SES on aspirations for age of marriage and orientations toward work after marriage. However, caution is required in making this statement because of limitations in our method of controlling for SES and the lack of any other relevant evidence.

Discussion

Our conclusion that race has an influence, independent of SES, on adolescent female orientations toward family formation supports and broadens similar conclusions reached by Rosen and Antonovsky with reference to job and educational orientations.[26] The particular nature of the racial differences observed, more than the simple fact that race produced differences, contains important theoretical implications. Our Negro girls desired substantially later marriage and desired and expected full-time work after marriage to a greater extent than their white counterparts. It is proposed that both these orientations involve motives indicative of a concern for economic and material status--the Negro girls indicating a greater concern in this regard. In this sense the Negroes' orientations, to the extent that they differ from the whites, are more compatible with the trends in the larger society. From this it may be inferred as a proposition worthy of future research that, at least in the rural South, Negro youth are more acculturated than their white counterparts. The lack of racial differences in size of family orientations reflected in the "ideal" of 3 children indicated by both groups further supports this contention, when one considers the substantial differences that existed in the size of families from which the two groups evolved--the Negro youth are obviously intending a greater generational change than the white girls. At any rate, our evidence broadens the support for the proposition

by Broom and Glenn and by Gordon that Negro youth are acculturated.[27] This conclusion also implies, as Antonovsky has clearly pointed out, that this may reflect "dissociation" taking place--a conscious turning away from or deliberately rejecting the negative status of Negroes.[28]

Given the gross differences in the backgrounds of the two racial groupings involved in our study, the general racial similarities observed may be of greater theoretical significance than the differences. The lack of racial differences on orientations toward family size, the fact that most respondents of both races desired relatively late marriage, and that most of both groups desired and expected to work after marriage offer evidence to support Merton's hypothesis that a broad acceptance of goals linked to "success" exist among all parts of our society. The results of our study are of particular significance in broadening the existing bases of support for this contention to include orientations toward family formation within the"frames of aspirational reference". These more general similarities also bring into question the utility of the idea of differential socialization in so-called ethnic subcultures as an explanation for differences in values and behavior of people. Neither the "rural Southern subculture" nor "Negro subculture" stereotypes would appear to hold up under the weight of our evidence.

Our findings support Slocum's contention that rural and urban populations within the United States are similar.[29] The rural girls of this study did not prefer to marry at a particularly early age. In fact, the average age of marriage desired by both Negroes and whites exceeded the average of 20.3 years for the total U. S. female population.[30] In addition, the "ideal" size of family

indicated by our rural girls is similar to the "ideal" expressed by most adult women in the recent past. This finding also contradicts a conclusion reached from an earlier study indicating that low-income youth plan marriage soon after leaving high school.[31]

In comparison with historical trends among the adult female population some interesting projections for future change may be made. First data from two (1955 and 1960) Growth of American Families (GAF) surveys of random samples of adult females indicate an increase in size of the ideal family.[32] The most popular ideal in 1941 was 2 children; in 1945 it was 3, and in both the 1955 and 1960 surveys the ideal was 4 children. The lower aspirations and expectations of the adolescent females in our sample indicates a reversal of this twenty year trend. Such a trend would considerably reduce the rate of future population growth. Another generalization from the adult samples is that women in smaller cities and rural areas typically expect more children than those in metropolitan areas. This may be another trend which will be altered in the future, if the aspirations of the youth in this study materialize.

Another area in which the adolescents in this study differed from the adult trends was that non-white adults have typically set their ideal number of children higher than whites. This finding was not supported in our sample. However, using the 1960 GAF study as a basis, it appears that non-white average expectations considerably exceed their preferences. That is, non-whites typically have a higher prevalence of unplanned children than whites. This "excess fertility" was 31% for non-whites as opposed to 17% for whites (1960 GAF survey). This finding, coupled with the statistic that Southern non-whites have 50% more births than

Southern whites in 1960 raises the question of whether the non-white adolescent expectations regarding family size are unrealistic. Non-whites have lacked adequate access to and knowledge of contraceptive devices in the past and if these can be provided there appears to be no reason for their expectations not to be more in line with their aspirations.

Relative to Stephenson's hypothesis that the distinction between aspirations and expectations is important because expectations are more variable than aspirations, our evidence offers mixed support.[33] The distinction seems to be of little significance relative to projections for size of family and, on the other hand, seems to be of importance relative to employment after marriage.

In conclusion it appears that future differences between marriage and family structures of rural Southern Negroes and whites will diminish. It should be possible to increase the stability of Negro marriage and family life dramatically, assuming that young people are capable of achieving their hopes and expectations. We can only guess that given the means (i.e., sex and birth control education, easy availability of birth control devices, and good professional counseling) that the rural girls studied would marry later and have smaller families. The goals of these girls are not incompatible with the objectives of society in providing them with greater opportunity for a better life. Consequently, it is suggested that efforts be made to provide them with the knowledge and techniques required for the achievement of their desired objectives. Also, the finding that almost half of our respondents of both races desired (and even more expect this) employment after marriage indicates a need to give more attention to developing effective vocational programs for girls in rural areas.

Obviously, because our study involved a small, homogeneous population and there is a glaring lack of additional collaborative data, the inference drawn above must be considered, at best, as hypotheses for future research. More research needs to be done on similar and different populations to test the general validity of our conclusions. Because race and, in all probability, residence do not appear to be critical explanatory factors of variance in family orientations, much additional research is needed to determine what factors account for the extensive variability observed in desired age of marriage, size of family, and employment after marriage. We question the utility of simplex notions about "subcultural" influences on the phenomena. In our judgment, future research will be more rewarded by seeking explanations in more specific variables that cut across (perhaps in no patterned way) ethnic and aerial distinctions: valuation of the family, valuation of children, types of significant others, and the nature of other components of the individual's projected frames of status reference.

Footnotes

1. As support for this assertion, evidence from several studies indicates that almost all youth desire marriage. See Karl C. Garrison, "A Study of the Aspirations and Concerns of Ninth-Grade Pupils from the Public Schools of Georgia," The Journal of Social Psychology, 69 (August, 1966), pp. 245-252; W. L. Slocum and L. T. Empey, "Occupational Planning by High-school and College Girls," Journal of Home Economics, 49 (February, 1957), pp. 125-126; R. D. Franklin and H. H. Remmers, "Youth Looks at Politics, College, Jobs and Family," The Purdue Opinion Panel, Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University, Division of Educational Reference, Report of Poll No. 60, July, 1960; and Elizabeth Douvan and Joseph Adelson, The Adolescent Experience, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966, pp. 42-44. Further, nearly everyone gets married today. One study revealed that as few as three percent of the men and women now in their late twenties may enter middle age without having married. See Robert Parke, Jr. and Paul C. Glick, "Prospective Changes in Marriage and the Family," in Marvin B. Susman (ed.), Sourcebook in Marriage and the Family, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968, pp. 106-114.

2. William P. Kuvlesky and George W. Ohlendorf, A Bibliography of Literature on Status Projections of Youth: III. Residence, Income, and Family Orientations. Texas A&M University, Department of Agricultural Economics and Sociology, Departmental Information Report No. 67-12, September, 1967.

3. Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, rev. and enl. ed., New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1957, pp. 132-141.

4. Jean Paul Mather, "And Angels Walk Where Only Males Tread: The Emergence to Womanpower," in Seymour Farber and Roger Wilson, The Challenge to Women, New York: Basic Books Inc., 1966, p. 109; Kate Hevner Mueller, "Education: The Realistic Approach," Ibid., p. 115; and Mirra Komarovsky, Women in the Modern World: Their Education and their Dilemmas, Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1953, p. vii.

5. Robert C. Williamson, Marriage and Family Relation, New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1966, p. 77; and William M. Kephart, The Family, Society, and the Individual, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1961, p. 221.

6. Gunnar Myrdal, The American Dilemma, New York: Harper and Row, 1962, p. 1286.

7. T. Lynn Smith, The Sociology of Rural Life (3rd ed.) New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953, p. 411.

8. According to the 1960 Census, 13.4 percent nonwhite females and 9.8 white females listed themselves as household heads. See: U. S. Bureau of Census. U. S. Census of the Population: 1960. Vol. I. Characteristics of the Population. Part 1, United States Summary, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.: 1964, Table 181, pp. 1-445 - 1-446. The 1960 census also reported that 41.8 percent of Negro females 14 years and over were employed as compared to 33.6 percent of the white females. See: U. S. Bureau of the Census. U. S. Census of Population: 1960. Detailed

Characteristics. United States Summary. Final Report PC (1)-1D. U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.: 1963, Table 194, pp. 1-448 - 1-489.

9. Robert Bell, Marriage and Family Interaction, Illinois: The Dorsey Press Incorporated, 1967, p. 416.

10. Merton, op. cit., pp. 132-141.

11. Leonard Broom and Norval D. Glenn, Transformation of the Negro American, New York: Harper and Row, 1965, p. 182.

12. Milton Gordon, "Assimilation in America: Theory and Reality," Daedalus, 90 (Spring, 1961), pp. 263-285. Gordon, however, observed that only "behavioral assimilation" is taking place at a fast rate while "structural assimilation" is not.

13. For evidence see the summary of research provided in a recent article by Ohlendorf and Kuvlesky, "Racial Differences in the Educational Orientations of Rural Youth," Social Science Quarterly, 49 (September, 1968), pp. 275-283.

14. L. W. Drabick, Marriage Plan and Migration Intent: Factors Associated with Expectations, Raleigh: North Carolina State University, Department of Agricultural Education and Rural Sociology, Educational Series No. 5, 1965. (Mimeographed).

15. See citations provided in footnote 1.

16. Slocum and Empey, op. cit., pp. 125-126; R. D. Franklin and H. H. Remmers, op. cit., and R. H. Turner, "Some Aspects of Women's Ambitions," The American Journal of Sociology, 70 (November, 1964), pp. 271-285.

17. Garrison found that over 90 percent of his ninth-grade respondents desired at least one child: "A Study of the Aspirations and Concerns of Ninth-Grade Pupils from the Public Schools of Georgia," The Journal of Social Psychology, 69 (August, 1966), pp. 245-252. The above report is the only one we could locate related to size of family orientations of adolescents; however, a host of studies have been reported on family size "ideals" and expectations of adult females. These studies generally show that the adult "ideal" family size has been within the range of 2-4 children since the thirties; furthermore, evidence exists that the ideal size has increased from about 2 to 4 over the span of time from the thirties up to the present (See findings cited in Judith Blake, "Ideal Family Size Among White Americans: A Quarter of a Century's Evidence," Demography, 3 (1966), pp. 154-173 and "Boom Babies Come of Age: The American Family at the Crossroads" in Marvin B. Sussman (ed.), Sourcebook in Marriage and the Family, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968, pp. 120-121.) In addition evidence exists indicating

that persons from rural backgrounds and those with low incomes maintain larger family size ideals than others and that Negroes have a lower ideal family size than whites (See R. Freedman and H. Sharp, "Correlates of Values about Family Size in the Detroit Metropolitan Area," Population Studies, 8 (July, 1954), pp. 35-45 and R. Freedman, D. Goldberg, and H. Sharp, "Ideals about Family Size in the Detroit Metropolitan Area: 1954," Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly, 33 (April, 1955), pp. 187-197.

18. Bernice M. Moore and Wayne H. Holtzman, Tomorrow's Parents, Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1965, p. 216.

19. From a study of 1,000 ninth-grade students, Stephenson concludes that this aspiration-expectation difference in variability was even greater for whites than Negroes: "Mobility Orientation and Stratification of 1,000 Ninth Graders," American Sociological Review, 22 (April, 1957), pp. 204-212. The distinguishing conceptual element between aspirations and expectations involves the nature of the orientation toward the status projected: aspirations involve desire, whereas, expectations--while perhaps desirable--must include anticipation of actual attainment.

20. A similar method using the occupational level of the father as an index of social stratification has been employed by Grant E. Youmans in his studies of adolescent boys. In these studies Youmans classified his sample into three social class groups namely, white collar workers, manual workers and farmers. For more information see: "Occupational Expectations of Twelfth Grade Michigan Boys," The Journal of Experimental Education, 24 (June, 1956), pp. 259-271 and "Social Factors in the Work Attitudes and Interests of Twelfth Grade Michigan Boys," Journal of Educational Sociology, 28 (September, 1954), pp. 35-48.

21. William P. Kuvlesky and W. Kennedy Upham. "Social Ambitions of Teen-Age Boys Living in an Economically Depressed Area of the South: A Racial Comparison." Presented at the annual Southern Sociological Society meeting, Atlanta, Georgia, March 30, 1967, p. 6.

22. See reports cited in footnote 17.

23. Drabick, op. cit., p. 11.

24. Slocum and Empey, op. cit., pp. 125-126; Franklin and Remmers, op. cit., pp. 1-16.

25. Walter L. Slocum, Agricultural Sociology: A Study of Sociological Aspects of American Farm Life, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962, p. 22.

26. Bernard C. Rosen, "Race, Ethnicity, and the Achievement Syndrome," ASR, 26 (February, 1959), pp. 47-60 and Aaron Antonovsky, "Aspirations, Class and Racial-Ethnic Membership," The Journal of Negro Education, 36 (Fall, 1967), pp. 385-393.

27. Broom and Glenn, op. cit. and Gordon, op. cit.

28. Antonovsky, op. cit.

29. Slocum, op. cit.

30. J. J. Moss, "Teen-age Marriages: Cross-National Trends and Sociological Factors in the Decision of When to Marry," Journal of Marriage and the Family, 27 (May, 1965), pp. 230-242.

31. See reports cited in footnote 17 and 18.

32. See "Boom Babies Come of Age: The American Family At the Crossroads," pp. 115-127 in Marvin B. Sussman (Ed.), Sourcebook in Marriage and the Family (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968).

33. Stephenson, op. cit.

APPENDIX A

COMPARISON OF NEGRO AND WHITE BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS

Table 11. Education of Father of Respondents

	Negro		White	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Don't know	28	28.3	20	14.9
Less than high school graduate	54	54.5	63	47.0
High school graduate	9	9.1	26	19.4
Some college or college graduate	8	8.1	25	18.7
TOTAL	99	100.0	134	100.0

Table 12. Education of Mother of Respondents

	Negro		White	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Don't know	17	17.2	7	5.2
Less than high school graduate	61	61.6	57	42.5
High school graduate	11	11.1	47	35.1
Some college or college graduate	10	10.1	23	17.2
TOTAL	99	100.0	134	100.0

Table 13. Employment Status - Father of Respondents

	Negro		White	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No father or can't work	11	11.3	15	11.2
Full-time	55	56.7	112	83.6
Part-time	24	24.7	6	4.5
Looking for work	2	2.1	--	--
Does not work	5	5.2	1	0.7
TOTAL	97	100.0	134	100.0

Table 14. Employment Status - Mother of Respondents

	Negro		White	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No mother or can't work	8	8.2	1	0.8
Full-time	32	32.7	38	28.6
Part-time	21	21.4	18	13.5
Looking for work	7	7.1	3	2.3
Does not work	30	30.6	73	54.8
TOTAL	98	100.0	133	100.0

Table 15. Identity of Main Breadwinner in Respondent Households

	Negro		White	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Father	71	71.7	114	85.1
Mother	19	19.2	17	12.7
Brother or sister	5	5.1	1	0.7
Other	4	4.0	2	1.5
TOTAL	99	100.0	134	100.0

Table 16. Marital Status of Parents of Respondents

	Negro		White	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Living together	68	68.7	118	88.1
Separated	14	14.1	1	0.7
Divorced	5	5.1	7	5.2
Father or mother dead	10	10.1	8	6.0
Both father and mother dead	2	2.0	--	--
TOTAL	99	100.0	134	100.0

Table 17. Number of Living Siblings of Respondents

	Negro		White	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
None	1	1.0	4	3.0
1 - 2	6	6.1	59	44.7
3 - 4	24	24.2	44	33.4
5 or more	68	68.7	25	18.9
TOTAL	99	100.0	132	100.0
Mean	5.9		3.0	

APPENDIX B

EXCERPTS FROM RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

6. What is your race? (Circle one number.)

1	2	3	4
American Indian	Oriental	Negro	Caucasian (white)

* * * *

11. At what age would you like to get married? [ ]

* * * *

12. How many children do you want? (Circle one number.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 or more

* * * *

13. How many children do you expect to have? (Circle one number.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 or more

* * * *

54. (a) What is the major job held by the main breadwinner of your home? (Write your answer in the following box. Give a specific job, not the company or place worked for.).

ANSWER: [ ]

* * * *

ORIGINAL DISTRIBUTIONS OF RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS USED IN THIS STUDY

Table 18. Size of Family Orientations as Indicated by Number of Children Desired by Negro and White Girls

Number of Children	Negro		White	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1	5	5.1	5	3.8
2	43	43.4	46	34.8
3	13	13.1	39	29.5
4	31	31.3	36	27.3
5	1	1.0	1	0.8
6	6	6.1	2	1.5
7	-	-	-	-
8 or more	-	-	3	2.3
TOTAL	99	100.0	132	100.0

Table 19. Size of Family Orientations as Indicated by Number of Children Expected by Negro and White Girls

Number of Children	Negro		White	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1	6	6.1	1	0.8
2	34	34.3	46	35.4
3	17	17.2	45	34.6
4	31	31.3	28	21.5
5	3	3.0	5	3.8
6	6	6.1	3	2.3
7	1	1.0	-	-
8 or more	1	1.0	2	1.6
TOTAL	99	100.0	130	100.0

APPENDIX C

TABLES ON LOWER CLASS COMPARISONS

Table 19. Desired Age at Marriage of Lower Class Negro and White Girls

Age	Negro N=67	White N=34	Total N=101
	----------PERCENT---------		
19 years and below	21	29	24
20 - 22 years	30	56	39
23 years and above	49	15	37
TOTAL	100	100	100

$X^2 = 11.79$ D.F. = 2 $P > .001 < .01$

Table 20. A Negro-White Comparison of Measures of Central Tendency in Reference to Desired Age at Marriage

	Negro N=67	White N=34
Mean	22.6 years	20.8 years
Median	22.0 years	21.0 years
Mode	24.0 years	21.0 years

Table 21. Desire and Expectation of Work After Marriage of Lower Class Negro and White Girls

Alternatives	Aspiration[1/]		Expectation[2/]	
	Negro N=62	White N=33	Negro N=65	White N=31
	----------PERCENT----------			
Not work at all	6	21	11	29
Work until children	36	61	38	42
Work after children	58	18	51	29
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

1/ $X^2 = 14.89$ D.F. = 2 $P < .001$

2/ $X^2 = 6.51$ D.F. = 2 $P > .02 < .05$

Table 22. Desire for Work After Marriage of Lower Class Negro and White Girls

Alternatives	Negro		White	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Not work outside the home at all	4	6.4	7	21.2
Work part-time until I have a child	8	12.9	9	27.3
Work full-time until I have a child	14	22.6	11	33.3
Work part-time even after I have children	23	37.1	4	12.1
Work full-time even after I have children	13	21.0	2	6.1
TOTAL	62	100.0	33	100.0

$X^2 = 15.24$ D.F. = 4 $P > .001 < .01$

Table 23. Expectation of Work After Marriage of Lower Class Negro and White Girls

Alternatives	Negro		White	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Not work outside the home at all	7	10.8	9	29.0
Work part-time until I have a child	15	23.1	9	29.0
Work full-time until I have a child	10	15.4	4	12.9
Work part-time even after I have children	22	33.8	7	22.6
Work full-time even after I have children	11	16.9	2	6.5
TOTAL	65	100.0	31	100.0

$X^2 = 7.16$ D.F. = 4 $P > .10 < .20$

G-3 (a) What do you want to do about work outside the home after you are married? (Circle one number.)

(b) What do you actually expect to do about work outside the home after you are married? (Circle one number.)

Want		Expect
1	Not work outside the home at all.	1
2	Work part-time until I have a child.	2
3	Work full-time until I have a child.	3
4	Work part-time even after I have children.	4
5	Work full-time even after I have children.	5